

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 06606 240832Z

60

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 ERDA-05

OES-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06

/051 W

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R 240750Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3205

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 6606

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TGEN, IS

SUBJECT: MEDITERRANEAN TO DEAD SEA CANAL PROJECT

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH DR. SHMUEL OFIR, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, ON SEPTEMBER 22 SCIATT WAS TOLD THAT THE STUDY FOR SUBJECT PROGRAM IS FUNDED IN AMOUNT OF IL 2.0 MILLION IN BOTH FY-76 AND FY-77. (ISRAEL'S FY IS APRIL 1 - MARCH 31.) STUDY IS SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED BY APRIL 1, 1978. GOI HAS SET UP MULTI-DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES FROM INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT AND UNIVERSITIES, TO ACT AS ADVISORY GROUP; OFIR, HOWEVER, DEPRECATED ITS IMPORTANCE, CANDIDLY STATING THAT REASON COMMITTEE WAS ESTABLISHED WAS TO MINIMIZE FUTURE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.

2. IDEA OF RUNNING A CANAL FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA TO THE JORDAN VALLEY DATES BACK TO BRITISH MANDATE PERIOD. THIS PROJECT, HOWEVER, IS THE FIRST SERIOUS EFFORT WITH SIGNIFICANT FUNDING AND CONTEMPLATING MULTIPLE USES. POSSIBLE USES INCLUDE: RECREATION, INLAND NUCLEAR POWER PLANT COOLING, DESALINIZATION, HYDROELECTRIC (REF. TEL AVIV A-186, PAGE 24, DATED 15 SEPT 76), AND MAINTENANCE OF DEAD SEA LEVEL (DROPPING DUE TO UPSTREAM DIVERSIONS) OR ENLARGEMENT TO INCREASE CHEMICAL BYPRODUCT PRODUCTION.  
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 06606 240832Z

3. COMMENT: BESIDES POTENTIAL TECHNOLOGICAL AND COMMERCIAL INTEREST TO U.S., THERE ARE OBVIOUS POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS AS WELL. ALL PROPOSED CANAL PATHS WOULD HAVE TO TRANSVERSE THROUGH WEST BANK OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. ADDITIONALLY, ANY MODIFICATION TO THE DEAD SEA LEVEL WOULD INVOLVE JORDANIAN RIPARIAN RIGHTS. JORDAN WILL THUS HAVE TO BE CONSULTED AT SOME POINT.

4. EMBASSY WILL REPORT ON STATUS OF STUDY AS IT DEVELOPS.  
TOON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Control Number:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 24 SEP 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** TGEN, EWWT, IS, (OFIR, SHMUEL)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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